



U.S. Immigration
and Customs
Enforcement

DRAFT

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News Release

ICE arrests Jamaican gang members in Rochester

-- Arrests are part of two-week nationwide gang operation --

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – Five Jamaican gang members are behind bars today following an investigation by special agents from U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement's (ICE) Buffalo office and the Rochester Police Department. The arrests are the latest in Western New York as part of Operation Community Shield, a comprehensive initiative launched by ICE roughly one year ago to disrupt and dismantle transnational, violent street gangs in the United States.

The five individuals are all illegally present in the United States. One of the gang members has re-entered the country after deportation and has been charged with a federal felony by U.S. Attorney for the Western District of New York. Three individuals have been charged federally with possession of fraudulent documents and one of those also faces a federal charge of illegal alien in possession of a weapon.

During the arrests a total of 17 pounds of marijuana and a stolen handgun were seized. One of the gang members will also face state drug charges.

All of the individuals have been identified as members or associates of the Hanna Street Posse, a gang active in the Rochester area. The individual will all be charged with immigration violations in addition to any possible criminal charges. They will be placed in removal proceedings and will appear before an immigration judge.

Peter J. Smith, special agent in charge of the Buffalo ICE office said working with local police is critical to attacking the gang problem in New York and around the nation. "These five arrests will make the streets of Rochester a safer place," Smith said. He pointed out that all of the individuals either came to the country legally and overstayed their visa or entered illegally. "Either way," Smith said, "they will all face prosecution and deportation and will not be able to continue their gang activity in Rochester."

"Our top priority is public safety and to have these five individuals off the street is an excellent accomplishment," Acting Police Chief James Sheppard said. "Officers John Brennan and Andrew Santell from our Special Investigations Section worked extremely hard on this investigation, assisted by additional support from our Special Investigations Section and Tactical Unit. They should especially be commended. Partnering with agencies such as U.S. Immigration and Customs

Enforcement is vital to our success. We will continue to coordinate with these agencies to clean up our streets and make our community a safer place to live and work,” Sheppard said.

During the two week long nationwide operation more than 375 gang members were arrested in the around the country bringing to 2,388 the number arrested in the first year of ICE’s Community Shield.

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.